



Lymphedema Therapy



CARSON TAHOE
— HEALTH —

Here's to your health.

Are you experiencing swelling or having difficulties due to cancer treatments?

It could be Lymphedema

Lymphedema is swelling in one or more parts of the body caused by a build-up of lymph fluid. This can occur most often as a side-effect of cancer treatment but can occur for other reasons as well. While the majority of lymphedema occurs in an arm and/or leg, other parts of the body can also be affected.

The purpose of the lymph system is to move fluid throughout the body. Lymphedema can happen if lymph vessels are damaged or if lymph nodes were removed during surgery. It can also be a side effect of radiation treatment. For example, after the removal of lymph nodes in the armpit or radiation to the lymph nodes in the armpit, swelling due to lymphedema may happen in that arm.

What causes Lymphedema?

Lymphedema can develop when the lymphatic system (closely related to the circulatory system) is malformed during fetal development, or when the lymphatic system is damaged by other conditions such as cancer treatment, diabetes, poor circulation, etc.

Lymphedema can happen days, months, or even years after radiation treatment or cancer surgery. These are possible triggers:

- Being overweight
- Infection
- Insect bites
- Overuse or injury
- Sunburn or heat exposure
- Little movement for a long time such as on an airplane or car ride
- Changes in elevation

What are the signs & symptoms of Lymphedema

Symptoms may happen slowly over time or quickly if you have an infection or injury. Tell your health care provider right away if you have any of these signs:

- Full, uncomfortable feeling in a specific area
- Tired, heavy or swollen limb
- Pressure or tightness under the skin
- Itching, aching, or burning feeling
- Trouble moving a joint in the arm or leg
- Wounds & discoloration of the skin over the swollen area
- Indent that stays longer than normal after skin is firmly pressed
- Poor skin integrity



Services Offered

Lymphedema Treatment using Combined Decongestive Therapy

The most effective Lymphedema treatment is known as Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT). CDT consists of Manual Lymphatic Drainage (MLD), short-stretch compression bandaging, therapeutic exercise, skincare, and patient education. CDT effectively reduces swelling and helps return the tissues to their normal size and function.

Manual Lymphatic Drainage (MLD)

Manual Lymphatic Drainage (MLD) is a type of gentle "hands-on technique" which encourages the natural flow of the lymph fluid through the body, reducing swelling and promoting healing. MLD is recognized as a primary tool in Lymphedema management and is only performed by certified MLD Therapists.

Compression Wrapping

Compression bandages are "short-stretch" bandages that are used to prevent the re-accumulation of lymph fluid and to assist the body in the re-absorption of excess fluid. Unlike common long-stretch bandages (like ACE bandages), short-stretch bandages are used by trained therapists to increase the efficiency of the muscle and joint pumps and help maintain and reduce limb swelling between visits.

Hygiene & Skin Care

Skin and nail hygiene are carefully addressed during treatment to decrease the risk of infection. Special skincare products are applied during treatment to help maintain a healthy skin barrier and proper pH of the skin.

Decongestive Exercises

All patients have specially designed exercise programs developed for them by our Therapists. These exercise programs are designed to be performed with short-stretch bandages and compression garments in place to help drain lymph fluid.

Risk Reduction Education

To aid in the patient's continued self-care process our Therapists provide specific instructions and education to help prevent future swelling and infection, therefore reducing the need for future medical attention. Our therapist will also get you fitted for custom compression garments to be worn daily to maintain limb size.

Cancer Rehab

Our physical therapists work with cancer patients to design personal exercise plans. The goal is to improve physical function, safety, and well-being. Physical therapy helps patients with problems that cancer and cancer treatment can cause, including balance, walking and movement, loss of strength, decreased range of motion, peripheral neuropathy, and neurological issues.

Carson Tahoe Therapy

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